

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT O 01014 311737Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05 NSC-05  
SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 EB-08 /065 W  
-----062761 010732Z /14

R 311710Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2234  
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN  
AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT OF SPAIN 1014

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, TD  
SUBJECT: THE DECLINE (AND FALL?) OF HECTOR MCCLEAN

1. EVIDENCE HAS BEEN MOUNTING IN RECENT WEEKS THAT MINISTER OF WORKS, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS, HECTOR MCCLEAN, IS ON THE POLITICAL SKIDS. CONSIDERED ONE OF THE BRIGHTER AND MORE CAPABLE YOUNG PEOPLE'S NATIONAL MOVEMENT (PNM) POLITICIANS AND AT ONE TIME A RISING STAR, MCCLEAN HAD BEEN TACKLING THE SEEMINGLY INTRACTABLE PROBLEMS UNDER HIS JURISDICTION WITH ENERGY AND SOME FLAIR, IF NOT ALWAYS WITH SUCCESS. WHILE ANYONE WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUCH PERENNIAL AND HIGHLY VISIBLE PROBLEM AREAS AS ROADS, AIRPORTS, PUBLIC TRANSPORT, PORTS, TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS IN T&T IS BOUND TO BE CRITICIZED, MCCLEAN HAD MANAGED TO AVOID SERIOUS DAMAGE TO HIS REPUTATION. MORE RECENTLY, HOWEVER, HE AND HIS MINISTRY HAVE EXPERIENCED A SERIES OF REVERSES WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE REDUCED HIS INFLUENCE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND MAY WELL PRESAGE HIS EARLY DEPARTURE FROM THE CABINET.

2. THE ATTACKS ON AND WHITTling AWAY AT THE MINISTRY  
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OF WORKS, MUCH OF WHICH HAS OCCURRED IN THE PAST MONTH OR SO, HAVE INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

A. PM WILLIAMS ORDERED THE REPLACEMENT OF THE MINISTRY'S PERMSEC, JOHN BUDDHU, WHO WAS SUDDENLY PLACED ON "COMPULSORY LEAVE;"

B. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RECENTLY INAUGURATED EXPRESS BUS SERVICE, GENERALLY CONSIDERED ONE OF MCCLEAN'S SUCCESSES, WAS SHIFTED TO THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE;

C. TRANSPORT COMMISSIONER, NOEL FORDE, WAS SUSPENDED FROM HIS POSITION BY THE PM ON ALLEGATIONS OF FRAUD IN LICENSING, AND WAS REPLACED "TEMPORARILY" BY RUSSELL TOPPING, AN ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE.

D. A PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE HAS BEEN SET UP IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE WHICH HAS TAKEN OVER RESPONSIBILITY FOR PIARCO AIRPORT AND IS LOOKING INTO DELAYS IN THE COMPLETION OF VARIOUS PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS, AS WELL AS COST OVERRUNS;

E. THE AUDITOR GENERAL HAS BEEN ASKED TO INVESTIGATE EXPENSES INCURRED THUS FAR DURING THE PIARCO AIRPORT EXPANSION PROJECT AND OTHER PROBLEMS RELATING TO THE MINISTRY'S PROCUREMENT OF GOODS AND SERVICES;

F. FORMER POLICE COMMISSIONER, EUSTACE BERNARD, HAS BEEN APPOINTED SOLE COMMISSIONER TO PROBE THE LICENSING DEPARTMENT AND MAKE APPROPRIATE RECOMMENDATIONS.

3. THE RESULT OF THE FOREGOING AND OTHER SIMILAR ACTIONS  
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HAS BEEN TO REDUCE MCCLEAN'S POWER WITHIN HIS OWN MINISTRY AND RAISE PUBLIC DOUBTS ABOUT HIS POLITICAL FUTURE. WHILE HE IS NOT WITHOUT HIS DEFENDERS IN THE PRESS AND THE PNM, HE APPEARS TO HAVE LOST THE CONFIDENCE OF THE ONE CONSTITUENT WHO REALLY COUNTS, ERIC WILLIAMS. MCCLEAN HIMSELF ADMITTED IN A PUBLIC GATHERING MARCH 29 THAT HIS DAYS MAY BE NUMBERED.  
FOX

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** POLITICAL LEADERS, PARTY DISSENSION  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** THE DECLINE (AND FALL?) OF HECTOR MCCLEAN  
**TAGS:** PINT, TD, PNM, YOUNG PEOPLES NATIONAL MOVEMENT, (MCCLEAN, HECTOR)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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